

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

*A guide to reporting possible code
violations in your community*



A Neglected property, overgrown lawns or discarded vehicles can detract from a community's appearance. Besides being unsightly, these conditions may create health concerns. This brochure provides basic information you need to know to file a complaint about suspected code violations on property in your community.

Activities or conditions that may have a negative effect on your community qualify as "Care of Premises Complaints" and can be reported to one or more Fairfax County agencies. Junk cars, tall grass, run down buildings, overcrowded properties, parked commercial vehicles, excessive noise and no heat, water or sewer are all examples of conditions that may be reported. Reporting the complaint starts the process.

The code enforcement process generally follows these steps:

1. A possible violation is reported.
2. A case is opened and assigned to an inspector in the appropriate agency.
3. A site inspection/inspections is performed.
4. If a violation is found, a Notice of Violation is issued to the responsible party.
5. The property is re-inspected at the expiration of the notice.
6. If the violation has not been corrected, the County may grant additional time for compliance or may pursue civil or criminal action to achieve code compliance.
7. Violation is resolved. Case is closed.

In some cases, the code or ordinance permits appeals of notices issued by county enforcement staff. Appeals stay enforcement and may extend the length of time for resolution of the complaint.

To resolve the problem we need your continued help. As a nearby resident you have a wealth of information about the problem that the enforcement official needs to know to be successful.

The following information provides a step-by-step guide to documenting a problem, filing a complaint with the appropriate agency and working with the County to resolve the concern.

WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

- ☐ Do a lot of different cars/trucks come and go to the property?
- ☐ Are people entering/exiting the home from different entrances?
- ☐ Do you see a frequent change of residents?
- ☐ Do you see cars under repair all the time? In all types of weather?
- ☐ Is more than one commercial vehicle (truck/taxi) parked on site?

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I RECORD?

Describe the behaviors you have observed and make notes about the occupants, vehicles and tag numbers. Make sure to include the date and time of your observation.

- ☐ **Who:** Who is the possible violator? A teenager, the tenant, the owner?
- ☐ **What:** Be able to describe the condition or activity that concerns you.
- ☐ **When:** What time of the day/night is it the best for observing the alleged violation?
- ☐ **Where:** A street address is needed to respond to a complaint. An intersection or a landmark can be used if an address cannot be provided.

HOW DO I REPORT A VIOLATION?

When you report a problem or file a complaint the call taker will ask you several questions. In addition to collecting information about the complaint you will be asked to give your name and phone number so that staff can stay in touch with you throughout the investigation. In some cases, your name may be released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request.

Report your concerns to the departments listed below:

Health Department: 703-246-2300 “TTY 711”

- Dilapidated/unsightly residential properties,
- Unsafe / unsanitary conditions,
- Property maintenance violations,
- Improper disposal of household garbage and/or trash,
- Rats, roaches, or mosquitoes,
- Too many people in a home

Police Department: 703-280-0550 or 703-691-2131 “TTY 711”

- Commercial Vehicles Parked on street in Residential Areas

Police Department: 703-280-0587 “TTY 711”

- Five or less inoperative motor vehicles on private property

Public Works & Environmental Services: 703-324-1950 “TTY 711”

- Grass over 12 inches on residential lots of less than ½ acre

Public Works & Environmental Services: 703-324-1937 “TTY 711”

- Construction without required permits

Zoning Enforcement: 703-324-1300 “TTY 711”

- Apartments in a single family home or more than 4 unrelated persons
- Too many animals in a home
- Ponding of water on a residential lot
- Junk and debris in yard
- Commercial vehicles parked on private property in residential area
- More than five inoperative motor vehicles on private property
- Noise complaints M-F from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; noise complaints after hours can be reported to 703-691-2131



This document is available in an alternative format upon request. Please call the Office of Public Affairs at 703-324-3187, TTY 703-324-2935.

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